

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday September 12th 2021

A Message to the Examination Candidates

On behalf of the IRTS Committee and myself I would like to wish all the candidates every success in their HAREC examination which took place on Saturday 11th of September. Unfortunately, you have been waiting a long time to sit the examination but I'm sure you will all appreciate it all the more when you receive your new call signs. The whole world of amateur radio will open up to you. This is just the beginning of a life-long learning experience.

I would sincerely like to thank Dave Moore EI4BZ for setting up and administering the courses, to all the tutors who gave selflessly of their time and expertise and to the National Shortwave Listeners Club who maintained a technical and social forum for all the candidates.

I hope we will see you all regularly on the air on whatever modes you may choose and also see whatever experiments and projects you are engaged in. Kind Regards from Your IRTS President Jim, EI4HH

Award of IARU Region 1 Medals announced

IARU Region 1 President Don Beattie G3BJ reports IARU-R1 are awarding Medals to six radio amateurs. His IARU-R1 post says: With the decision to hold the planned October 2021 workshop event virtually, Region 1 is now not able to make planned in-person announcements and presentations of Medals to recognise exceptional support for the Region's work.

The Executive Committee has therefore decided to move ahead now with the announcement, deferred from the 2020 Virtual General Conference, of the award of Medals to the following six people.

Dave Court, EI3IO: recently retired as SRLC Chair and EC member, who led the SRLC through the period of WRC 19 which resulted in the Region-wide allocation to the amateur service of a 2 MHz segment at 50 MHz. Dave led the IARU work on this 6 metre allocation and also played a role as a member of the extended EC group. Dave remains a member of the SRLC.

Hilary Claytonsmith G4JKS, EMC Committee member and until recently its Secretary for nearly 25 years and IARU representative in ETSI during discussions on PLT. The EMC Committee is a forum for progressing the Region's work on EMC matters and much of its success is due to Hilary's early work. Hilary remains a member of the EMC Committee.

Peter Jost, HB9CET: Acting IARUMS coordinator for a period until October 2020 and deputy coordinator for many years, Peter continues in this deputy role. He has made a major contribution to the IARU MS Newsletters and has developed excellent professional presentation material on the IARUMS work. The IARUMS is internationally recognised for the quality of its work.

Tore Worren, LA9QL: Recently retired as Region 1 EMC Committee Chair and IARU global EMC coordinator, Tore has successfully represented IARU in CISPR and built a core team of around 20 – 25 country EMC specialists who meet regularly to review progress. His foundation work in CISPR has built a strong basis of credibility for IARU in EMC matters. He also played a role as part of the extended EC group. Tore remains a member of the EMC Committee.

Jacques Verleijen, ON4AVJ: Recently retired VHF+ Committee Chair, a post he held since 2014. In that time he has coordinated the work on VHF+ areas, revised the VHF Handbook, developed the Contest Working Group and surveyed MS on VHF+ activity levels. He also played a role as part of the extended EC group. He remains a member of the PRC and Secretary to the VHF+ Committee.

Hans Welens, ON6WQ: Hans built the concept of STARS from 1990, acting as STARS Chairman until 2011. He returned to the role in 2019 on a short-term basis to refocus the work. Hans believes passionately in the need to support the development of smaller societies and through his personal efforts has energetically enabled the development of a number of African societies. Without Hans, STARS would likely not have had the impact it has had.

I hope you will join with me in congratulating these six people who have each made a very significant contribution to IARU Region 1's work over the years.

Hot Air Balloon

Using the callsign HB9HC/AM, the National Mountain Day Commission of the Swiss USKA will be operating during a hot-air balloon flight. The HB9HC/AM team looks forward to making a QSO with you this Tuesday, but given the volatility of the mode of transport there are backup dates on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday. Each ride will take about two hours, starting 0530 at the earliest, and ending at around 0900

UTC at the latest. Scheduling a hot-air balloon flight depends significantly on the weather, so be patient. The probability that a trip can take place on the intended date is roughly 50%, and the decision whether or not to take off could be made at the last minute. The web team will do its very best to keep the information as up to date as possible.

The crew of four will use a KX3 producing 15W fed into dangling antennas for 40m, 30m, 20m and additional bands if possible.

It is advisable to monitor the Reverse Beacon Network or a DX cluster to keep current on the latest operating frequency and one can track the balloon's exact position using APRS.

Every QSO will be automatically confirmed with a "Balloon Card" sent via the bureau. Further details on QRZ.com.

Operators planning to make a QSO with the balloon team should familiarize themselves with the following Q codes: QAH for Altitude, QAL for Landing, QGK for Track, in degrees, QTK for Speed over ground, QTN for Departure.

Amsat and ARISS news

AMSAT-EA's GENESIS Satellites were lost in the launch failure of the Firefly Alpha rocket. Last Thursday evening, approximately 2.5 minutes after liftoff the rocket blew up with a loss of all satellites onboard. Among the payloads lost were AMSAT-EA's GENESIS-L and GENESIS-N amateur radio satellites. Felix Paez, EA4GQS, from AMSAT-EA said "we are very proud of all the team work and very grateful for this opportunity Firefly has granted to us." He added, "in January we will launch with SpaceX through Alba Orbital, our FM repeaters Hades and EASAT-2. We will keep you posted."

AO-7 entered the period of full illumination last Thursday. This will last until the 11th of April next year. While in full illumination, the satellite's 24 hour timer will automatically switch between operation in Mode A using a 145 MHz uplink and 29 MHz downlink, and Mode B using a 432 MHz uplink and 145 MHz downlink.

The Mode A transponder uses a 145.850 – 145.950 MHz uplink and a 29.400 – 29.500 MHz downlink. Unlike the Mode B transponder, the Mode A transponder is non-inverting.

QSOs have been made using small portable 10m antennas for the downlink, but a full size dipole or directional antenna works best.

A mode change is due to the ARISS transmission schedule aboard the international Space Station. The downlink frequency on which to listen remains on 145.800 MHz worldwide. The cross band repeater uplink is 145.990 MHz up and 437.800 MHz down. Next mode change is to packet operation 145.825 MHz simplex in late September. In order to appear on the ariss.net web page, a position report in a valid APRS format must be digipeated through ISS, then be heard by an internet gateway station, which then forwards it on to the APRS Internet System. All APRSIS data is archived on the site, packets that came through the ISS are recalled for display. Have a look at ariss.net

Revised copy of the Digital Operating Manual

Steve EI5DD has revised the content of the Digital Radio Operating Manual to include Northern Ireland Digital Repeater Systems and Digital Gateways. The Content includes a Basic Tutorial covering the programming of DMR Radios, DMR, C4FM, and D-Star Operation. Repeater Roaming and GPS operation via DMR is include along with the set-up for Hytera and Motorola Radios. Talk Group lists for the whole of Ireland and the UK are covered with the preferred use of Time Slots. There are maps of Repeater Coverage Networks and extensive Talk Group Lists for the Brandmeister Network, the Phoenix Network and the DMR+ Network. The information contained in this Operating Manual, should facilitate programming and understanding of the various DMR Networks. Copies of the Manual may be found on the EI7GL blog at ei7gl.blogspot.com and also the Galway Radio Club Website on the front page.

On the Air

The CW part of Scandinavian Activity Contest will take place from Saturday 1200UTC until Sunday 1200UTC. Each part of this "Polar Battle" usually gathers over 1000 testers from all around the world. The Scandinavian Activity Contest offers non-Scandinavians a unique opportunity to work the propagationally challenged Arctic nations and practice your skills.

Members of REF, the Réseau des Émetteurs, literally translated meaning the Network of French Radio Transmitters, are now active as TM100AA until Wednesday. This is to commemorate 8AA, the first callsign given to a Ham Radio in France. After the First World War, the first authorized station was André Riss. He received the callsign "8AA" on September 3rd, 1921, without a nationality prefix, not intended for amateur stations at the Berne Convention. The number "8" is a tribute to the General Ferrie of the 8th Engineer Regiment. in 1927 André became eF8AA , short for Europe France

8AA , then F8AA in 1932. André joined the REF in August 1927, with the REF number 423. He was active until his death on March 2nd, 1982. QSL goes via the Bureau and the QSL Manager is F2VX.

Listen for the Special Event station callsign 6I1M, commemorating the 211th anniversary of the Grito de Dolores and the 200th anniversary of the Consummation of the Independence of Mexico. Until the end of the month several XE hams are working on 80/40/20/15/10 meters using CW, SSB, FT8/FT4, Echolink as XE1SOV-L and DMR on Talkgroup 33456. QSL via XE1SPM only.

For the next fortnight, 7Z91ND, 8Z91ND and HZ91ND are marking the 91st anniversary the Unification Day for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Saudi National Day. There will be three free electronical awards available by E-mail upon request. QSL all callsigns via HZ1SAR of the Saudi Amateur Radio Society.

D60AC and D60AD will start operating next Saturday from Moroni, one of the Comoros Islands. They will be on 80m with an inverted L and 50 Watts, and on 40 thru 10 meters with verticals and 500 Watts, using all modes. QSL via their home callsigns or via ClubLog

DL2JRM, is active as Z68XX from Kosovo until tomorrow, using CW on various HF bands. You may catch him in the Worked All Europe DX SSB Contest which is still running as of now. QSL via DL2JRM.

IOTA EU-042, known as Hallig Hooge, is worth chasing because it is not there all of the time. Located of the northwest coast of Germany on a large tidal plain, it occasionally submerges during spring tides and storms. DA0DFF will be on air from the 20th until the 26th of this month on HF and QO100. QSL via the DARC QSL Bureau.

And that leaves the best until last: EU-121, Bere Island will be activated by Charlie Ei8JB, from Thursday until next Sunday. He will be on various HF bands using CW, SSB and PSK/RTTY, as well as possibly FM Satellite. QSL via LoTW, or by Bureau and ClubLog's OQRS.

The Propagation Horoscope

With the meteorological start to autumn ionospheric conditions will also change. European signals on the upper HF bands are getting weaker due to the weakenig of the E-layer. In summer the F-layer splits into F1 and F2, but is now rising to just the higher F2 regions. Solar activity is generally on the increase, although five large visible areas only produced three coronal mass ejections, plus two flares during last

night. solar wind this morning is around 350 km/s and the proton flux is about 8 protons per cubic centimetre. The solar flux increased from about 75 to around 100 during the past month. The plasma cloud from the last coronal mass ejection only just missed earth, leaving the earth's magnetic field undisturbed. Regions 2866 is decaying and 2868 emitted two flares, one yesterday night around 2300 and another one around 04.30 this morning. flux is still at 92, the plasma cloud has yet to hit us, but the effects are already being felt here on 80m and topband. The last active regions 2860, 2862 and 2867 are currently on the far side and will re-emerge from about Wednesday onwards. That gives us reliable 15m openings to the far east early in the mornings. At the time of writing the MuF2 for a 3000km hop distance rose from around 15-18Mhz last week to a frequency of 23 Mhz at noon. Expect good signals from the Pacific in the mornings, VK and ZL will be in range until 0800 UTC and again early in the evening on 40, 30 and 20m.

That is the news for this week. Items for inclusion in next week's radio news can be submitted by email to newsteam@irts.ie for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. The deadline is midnight on Friday.

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